

## Amendments to the Claims

1-14. (Cancelled).

15. (Currently Amended): A liquid crystal display device, comprising:  
an alignment layer comprising constituent materials, the constituent materials ~~including having~~ a stoichiometric relationship configured to provide a given pretilt angle, wherein the stoichiometric relationship is configured by introducing an amount of material to adjust a stoichiometric ratio of the constituent materials, the amount determined to provide the given pretilt angle; and  
liquid crystal material in contact with the alignment layer.

16. (Original): The device as recited in claim 15, wherein the material includes  $\text{SiC}_x$  wherein x is adjusted to provide the stoichiometric relationship.

17. (Currently Amended): The ~~method-device~~ device as recited in claim 15, wherein the material includes silicon oxynitride.

18. (Currently Amended): The ~~method-device~~ device as recited in claim 15, wherein the material includes a material having Pi-electrons.

19. (Currently Amended): The ~~method-device~~ device as recited in claim 15, wherein the alignment layer includes a tilted homeotropic alignment layer.

20. (New): A liquid crystal display device, comprising:

an alignment layer comprising constituent materials, the constituent materials having a stoichiometric relationship configured to provide a given pretilt angle, wherein a non-rubbing ion beam irradiation is employed on the surface of the alignment layer to control the uniformity of the pretilt angle; and

liquid crystal material in contact with the alignment layer